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The Influence of the Melodrama on the Works
of
Henry Arthur Jones

THE INFLUENCE OF THE MELODRAMA ON THE WORKS
OF HENRY ARTHUR JONES

BY

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPER-
VISION BY Hazel Mildred Chadderton

ENTITLED The Influence of the Melodrama on the Works of Henry
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BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF Master of Arts.

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Contents.

Chapter.	Page.
I. Melodrama: What is it?	1.
II. Life of Henry Arthur Jones.	13.
List of Jones' works.	
III. First Period: 1878-1884.	19.
IV. Second Period: 1884-1891.	27.
V. Third Period: 1891-1904.	35.
VI. Fourth Period: 1906-1914.	49.
Conclusion.	54.
Bibliography.	57.



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I MELODRAMA: WHAT IS IT?

Melodrama has always had a power to attract, just as have the spread heads of our modern newspapers. This was especially true in London between the years 1880 and 1890, and London conditions were those of all England. From 1860 all classes of society flocked to the theatre. Under such encouragement theatres sprang up on every side. But unfortunately for dramatic art it was the day of long runs, and every manager dreamed of no end but to please the great British public and thus secure the coveted long run. Fifty nights spelt failure and were scarcely sufficient to meet the expenses of staging; one hundred and fifty nights insured success. An enviable record was that of Our Boys by H.J. Byron, which ran fifteen hundred continuous nights.

It was the day, too, of actor-managers; that is, each theatre was owned or leased by an actor. During the 80's Kendal-Hare managed the St. James's Theatre; the Bancrofts, the Haymarket; Clayton-Cecil, the Court; Charles Wyndham, the Criterion. There were scores of other managers and other theatres, but those mentioned were the most influential in London at that time. Each of these stage managers selected the play that he believed could be staged with the greatest success. Success depended entirely on the approval and patronage of the public; and the public was showing a decided preference for melodrama.

The question might well be asked why the stage managers did not strive to educate the people to an appreciation of a drama that was more representative of life. What was the force which prevented them from asserting their own personal artistic tastes? They refused to take the blame, competition was too strong. Quoting

from them: "The trouble is not internal, but external in the shape of the music-hall, which stands at our very threshold and is such a ruthless competitor. In order to neutralize the effects of this competition we are often compelled to renounce our artistic ideals and provide the public with the sort of amusement it prefers."¹ The music halls were attracting all classes, for they offered a light and varied program of pure entertainment; they were comfortably furnished, cheerfully lighted. Men were permitted to smoke; the dress of street or shop was worn,- this freedom appealed to the work-a-day world, looking for relief from business cares. They were a serious business people who enjoyed frivolous entertainment. To-day, librarians declare that the British public reads one hundred novels to any other type of literature; and that of the novelists read, Meredith and Hardy are sadly neglected.

What was the exact nature of the supply that followed such a demand? Stage-managers strove for long runs which came through French adaptations of a melodramatic character, and original English plays of a farcical or melodramatic order. But nothing that was to live as a great masterpiece was being produced. It had been for a score of years common practice for French dramas to be translated bodily or with slight adaptations. These are of interest to us, in that their influence extended to the melodrama; they have scenes of a similar sensational nature. Noemie furnishes an example; it was a French play written by Denney and Clement, and later translated and adapted by Tom Robertson. It has many stagey scenes. The main action concerns Noemie who comes to the Chateau de Quercy to present to Count D'Avrigny her claim as his daughter. Her mother had separated from the Count to spare his proud old family from any hum-

1. English Stage of To-day- Borsa.

iliation, but at her death had sent Noemie with a letter to him. Before Noemie has explained her relationship, she is employed as waiting-maid to Valentine whom the Count has just married. Noemie thus wins the old man's heart before he knows her as daughter, at the same time arousing the jealousy of Valentine. The following scene of explanation is typical of this and all French adaptations that were in vogue in England between 1860 and 1888:

Count: (opening the letter and reading the signature) "Marie Lambert."

Marie! a letter from her, after so many years. "George, death is stealing fast on me." Death! Poor Marie! "Have you ever thought of her who for eighteen years has prayed in secret for your happiness? who for eighteen years has wept for you, but to-day, finds life, with hope exhausted. But that my conscience imposes on me a sacred duty, you never should have heard again of me; but I have not alone to suffer. I have - I have - a child - your daughter, George - a child, both beautiful and young. I do not ask you to give her your name or fortune, but I entreat you on my knees, to guard and watch over her, that she may not some day, die, despairing and abandoned, like her poor mother, Marie Lambert." (with emotion.) Oh, Heaven! "'Tis she - our child, Noemie - who is the bearer of this letter." Noemie! -----my child - lost! dishonored! (in tears.) ----- She who has tended me with so much devotion was my child - the child of poor Marie Lambert. Now I understand the pious subterfuge that brought her to my house; now I understand her indefatigable zeal, her anxious days, her sleepless nights. Poor Noemie, to be near me she consented to become a servant.

Enter Noemie.

She is here. Ah, she is lovely! Come here ----- what's the

matter with you? You are pale and trembling?

Noemie: Madame told me that you wished to speak with me. Oh, for heaven's sake, I conjure you - I entreat you, keep me near you. If I have offended Madame, I will ask her to forgive me on my knees; if I have offended you -

Count: Me! ----- offended me! How is that possible? Think you I can forget your watchful days, your nights passed sleeplessly? When overcome with pain I closed my eyes, others thought I slept and left me; you - you alone remained by my bedside, and watched and wept over me.

Noemie: Me, monsieur? Oh, no!

Count: I have seen you, and heard your prayer to heaven; for you prayed for me as a good and filial daughter would pray for her father.

Noemie: (starting.) Her father! (calming herself.) I saw you were in pain.

Count: And at that time, I thought I heard another well-loved voice - a voice that had not struck upon my ear for eighteen years.

Noemie: Eighteen years?

Count: I looked into your eyes and through my pain it seemed to me that the angel of my first love came to claim my soul; and, that I might die in peace and holiness, heaven had sent Marie Lambert. (Noemie sinks on her knees sobbing.) At my knees! To my heart! To my heart! In my arms! (they embrace.) My child!

Noemie: Father! Oh, my mother, if you could see us now!¹
The same sensational element found in this was found in melodrama. The same audience that enjoyed this adaptation enjoyed melodrama. Such a scene as the one just given from Noemie might have

1. Noemie - Robertson
Act II - p. 21.

been copied verbatim from the melodrama that followed a decade later. It is so akin in spirit that the most discerning critic would have difficulty in finding a distinguishable difference between it and the original English melodrama. The day of adaptations, however, was on the wane and that of the pure melodrama of the original English dramatists was arising to replace adaptations in popular favour.

Having examined a scene, typical of melodrama in its exaggeration, we turn to a more careful study of melodrama itself which was to flourish by the support of such writers as Sidney Grundy, Dion Boucicault, H.J.Byron, and others. The best definition of the nineteenth century melodrama is to be found in the Oxford Dictionary which describes it as a "state play (usually romantic and sensational in plot and incident) in which songs were interspersed and in which the action was accompanied by orchestral music appropriate to the situations. In later use the musical element ceased to be an essential feature of the melodrama and the name now denotes a dramatic piece characterized by sensational incident and violent appeals to the emotions but with a happy ending."

The music was used to give cues, or to heighten the emotional appeal, often one of pathos. The effectiveness of music was recognized, for a time, to be as indispensable as in the moving pictures of to-day. Especially has its power been demonstrated in the spectacular photo-play, "Birth of a Nation"; there the responsiveness of the audience to the pathos and horror of war is largely due to the stirring music.

In H.J.Byron's melodrama, The Lancashire Lass, music played a strong part. There, the cues are indicated by music; as, "Music

for Johnson's entrance"; "Music - seven bars before the curtain"; "Exit L. - Music". Used thus, it does not directly affect the play, it merely aids in the stage directions. Frequently, it does affect the play though, serving as a potent exciting force in the rising action, as, in the following scene:

Milder: Who was he after all?

Spotty: I don't know. He spoke of himself as a party of the name of Johnson.

Redburn: "A party of the name of Johnson?" (Mysterious music.)¹ Or it may be used to intensify the emotional appeal. An example of this is found in the same play when music is the accompaniment of Kate's monologue as she contemplates suicide.

Kate: (Music, tremolo.) The hour I longed for has not made me wait - it has come at last. (Music, long drawn chords, bass.) I knew this would be the end. (wrings her hands.) Oh, placid waters, how many dark crimes have you hidden! how many aching hearts have quenched their anguish in your bosom! (pause.) He forgave me - he forgave me! me who had done so much wrong to him! Do I forgive him? Do I forgive all who have injured me? No, no! let me not think of that! I must finish with this forever - this night! My life seems to sweep before me as in a dream - all that I ever did, thought or said! My love, my hate, my revenge, - oh! (covers her face with her hands.) There lies rest for the weary, there lies the last resource of the broken in spirit and the dead of heart! Let me - what's that? Oh! The night-boat! I shall be seen. I will wait till it has discharged its passengers - that will not be long. I can wait! I can wait!

1. Lancashire Lass - Byron
Act I, p. 19.

To be sure music was not an essential of melodrama and tended to disappear, at least to decrease.

The sensational element, however, is always present. This sensationalism may appear as the result of bringing together a varied and manifold collection of experiences in a very brief space of time, the individual experience of which might come in any normal life; but there is too much piling up, too many co-incidences. Or the sensationalism may be in a separate incident that overtaxes the credulity of the spectator. The sensational characteristic of melodrama may be due to either element or both.

Dion Boucicault in his Colleen Bawn is sensational in both respects; and yet Colleen Bawn is saved from descending to the level of cheap trash through his sympathetic and skilful portrayal of characters, notably that of Eily. A synopsis will make clear the exaggeration which pervades it. Hardress Cregan secretly marries Eily O'Connor, known as the Collen Bawn, but hesitates to present her to his mother on account of "her awkward manners, her Kerry brogue, her ignorances of the usages of society". And so he is expected to marry Anne Chute and her money, thus redeeming the lost fortunes of the Cregan family. Anne loves Kyrie Daly, however, and believes he returns her affections until she misunderstands a remark of Danny's which leads her to believe Kyrl is a faithless lover. Danny is a cripple who idolizes Hardress and offers to rid him of Eily, clearing the way for his marriage with Anne. Such an offer, Hardress refuses to consider; he has Danny promise never to harm a hair of her head, unless a glove is sent him as a token. Later the glove is given Danny by Mrs. Cregan who knows nothing of its

1. Lancashire Lass - Byron
Act II, Scene II, p. 30.

8

significance, nor does Hardress know that it has been given. Danny then hastens to Eily with the message which is to betray her: "You are to meet Masther Hardress this evenin' at a place on the Devil's Island, byant ----- just after dark."¹ Meanwhile, Anne and Hardress meet in a wood near the verge of a lake. Anne tells him she now knows her heart, she is his. An exciting scene follows, an excellent illustration of a scene, sensational in itself. The setting is noteworthy.

A cave; through large opening at back is seen the Lake and the Moon; rocks - music.

Eily: What place is this you've brought me to?

Danny: Never fear - I know where I'm goin' - step out on that rock - mind yer footin'; 'tis wet there.

Eily: I don't like this place - it's like a tomb.

Danny: Step out; I say; the boat is laking. (Eily steps on to rock.)

Eily: Why do you speak to me so rough and cruel?

Danny: Eily, I have a word to say t'ye; listen now, and don't trimble that way.

Eily: I won't Danny - I won't -----Danny, what do you want me to do? (Danny steps out on rock.)

Danny: Give me that paper in your breast? (Boat floats off slowly)

Eily: I can't - I've sworn never to part with it! You know I have!

Danny: Eily, that paper stands between Hardress Cregan and his fortune; that paper is the ruin of him. Give it, I tell yez.

Eily: Take me to the priest; let him lift the oath off me. Oh, Danny, I swore a blessed oath on my two knees, and would ye ax me to break that?

Danny: (Seizes her hands.) Give it up, and don't make me hurt ye.

1. Colleen Bawn - Boucicault
Act II - Scene III, pp. 24-25.

Eily: I swore by my mother's grave, Danny. Oh! Danny dear, don't.⁹
Don't, acushla, and I'll do anything. See now, what good
would it be? sure, while I live I'm his wife. (Music changes.)

Danny: Then you've lived too long. Take your marriage lines wid ye
to the bottom of the lake. (He throws her from rock backwards
into the water, with a cry; she reappears, clinging to rock.)

Eily: No! save me! Don't kill me! Don't, Danny, I'll do anything -
only let me live.

Danny: He wants ye dead. (Pushes her off.)

Eily: Oh heaven! help me. Danny - Dan- (sinks.)

Danny: (Looking down.) I've done it - she's gone.

(Shot is fired; he falls - rolls from rock into water.)¹

The rest is easy to guess, considering the period in which it was written. Myles, a former suitor of Eily's, rescues the drowning pair. Preparations for the wedding of Hardress and Anne are being made. Neither successfully conceals his or her feeling. "By night he creeps out alone in his boat on the lake - by day he wanders round the neighborhood pale as death." Anne, standing alone on her wedding day says: "Pretty feelings for a girl to have, and this is my wedding day." Kyrle anxiously awaits the morrow when he sails from Liverpool. So all moves toward a tragically unhappy conclusion. On the wedding evening Hardress confesses his former marriage and Eily's suicide. Armed men surround the house; and Hardress is accused of bringing about Eily's death. Of course, Eily appears in time to save him. Upon seeing her Hardress exclaims: "Eily, I couldn't live without you." Anne cannot permit her wedding dress to go to waste; she appeals to the gallant gentlemen to save her. Kyrle unhesitatingly presents himself. This synopsis of Colleen Bawn is full of incidents,

1. Colleen Bawn - Boucicault.

Act II - Scene VI, pp. 27-28.

probable in themselves, but improbable en masse. The one scene to which special attention was given is improbable in itself, at least scarcely plausible. The setting has been selected with too great care for a realistic effect.

To go back to the definition of the Oxford Dictionary - it has already been shown that music was frequently used; that the sensational incident was always present. Melodrama has "violent appeals to the emotions"; this needs no explanation. Music and sensational incidents were merely factors in producing an emotional appeal. The next characteristic demanding attention is "the happy ending." The happy ending is to be remarked upon because it was in attaining it that the play-wright sacrificed all regard for realism or art. Melodrama was destined to be tragedy, then the writer to please the stage manager, who in turn was trying to please the people, tacked on a happy ending. For that reason William Archer calls it "illogical tragedy in which causes and effects are out of proportion." The plot led one to expect the conclusion to be tragical when lo! special providence stepped in, rescued the hero and heroine, and the curtain fell upon a happy picture.

Byron in his Lancashire Lass comes to the last act with Ruth and Ned Clayton living happily together but for the suspicion of murder, of which he has not been able to clear himself, although the crime occurred five years before. A letter brings news that a man before dying has confessed his guilt, so Ned is cleared. Then comes Redburn who had accused him, tries to purloin the letter which establishes Clayton's innocence. Spotty and Clayton arrive at the opportune moment to save the letter. The pursuers of Redburn are heard without. Clayton hands Redburn a revolver with which to defend himself, Redburn turns it against his lender. But again at the

critical time special providence intervenes - Redburn is shot by a man without, who proves to be Johnson. All this after five years of comparative quiet and peace! A number of well-timed, although illogical events, had to transpire in a short time to satisfy the devotees of the happy ending. This was the type that pleased, for a critic writes of its production thus: "During its first representation there were periods of silence so marked during the working out of the plot, that the deep, excited breathing of the more impressionable of the audience could be distinctly heard. At other times the enthusiasm surged up beyond control, and bursts of applause, cheers, and waving of handkerchiefs greeted the success of the hero and heroine in escaping the pitfalls prepared for them."¹ The Germans aptly call melodrama Volksstück (play of the people); it is they who have dictated the conclusion. An average audience will readily sacrifice logic or art for a happy ending. They contend there is enough unhappiness in the world, without seeing it reproduced on the stage. Walter Prichard Eaton calls us "cowards in art". In his Plays and Players he rails against the audience that rejects a serious play because it has an unpleasant element of truth in it. It justifies the critical wrath against the happy ending. "It is not because critics love laughter less but logic more."²

A fourth distinction and an important one must yet be made between melodrama and tragedy. Whereas, in tragedy, the characters control the plot; in melodrama, the plot controls the characters. Sometimes, melodrama makes no attempt to present characters that speak or act as individuals, it has inconsistent personages that

1. Lancashire Lass - Byron

p. 45

2. Plays and Players - W.P. Eaton

p. 303.

carry on the action. More often it shows some characterization but reserves the right for its cast to act out of character when necessary to further the plot. It is the plot which stands out in the play; the characters do not fix themselves in the minds of the spectators.

Melodrama of the 80's has been defined and illustrated; the great British public which dictated it and which stage-managers must pamper if they would gain patronage has been described. In such an age, under such conditions of the stage appeared Henry Arthur Jones. Did he fall in line? He had to learn in such a school. How far did he adhere to its principles? The following sections purpose to analyze the effect of melodrama on his writings.

II Life of Henry Arthur Jones

Henry Arthur Jones was born at Grandborough, Buckinghamshire, September 20, 1851. His father, Silvanus Jones, was a farmer of the peasant class with stern puritanic ideas. The education of Henry Arthur Jones began in the village school at Windsor; it was discontinued when he was thirteen years old that he might be apprenticed to a business firm in Bradford. He performed his work faithfully, but admits he detested it. Later, he became a commercial traveller. It was in his eighteenth year while on a business trip to London that he saw his first play. Miss Bateman was then playing at the Haymarket Theatre in the melodrama, "Leah".

This visit inspired him to write for the stage, although he still continued his business career for nine years; that is, until 1878. In that year his first play was produced, which may explain why he felt justified in proclaiming himself an author and no longer a business man. The next year his first notable production, Clerical Error, was staged at the Court Theatre by Wilson Barrett. In 1882 Archer, in a criticism, included him among the leading modern playwrights. Immediately, the question arose on every side, "who is this Henry Arthur Jones?" His "Silver King", written in collaboration with Henry Herman, answered the question. In fact, the works of his first period were all written with some help by experienced literary people.

In 1884, Saints and Sinners, his first independent play, may be said to mark the beginning of a second period. The period shows promise of dramatic power along with some mediocre work. It was not till 1891 that Jones stood at the height of his ability. His compositions were then recognized and sought by theatre directors.

Then came a decline in 1906, a returning to his first period in technique. This has been accounted for by his illness, a generous excuse and probably a correct diagnosis of his relapse; for, in the spring of 1912, he had to undergo a grave operation which proved successful. Since his recovery he has produced works that prove he had not exhausted his ability to charm and entertain an audience by his plays.

List of Jones' Works.

First Period: 1878-1884.

It's only round the Corner.	1878 Exeter, Royal Theatre.
Hearts of Oak.	1879, May 29. Exeter, Royal Theatre.
Elopement.	1879, August 19. Theatre Royal, Oxford.
Harmony.	1879, August 19. Grand Theatre, Leeds.
A Clerical Error.	1879, October 13. Court Theatre.
An Old Master.	1880, November 6. Princess Theatre.
His Wife.	1881, April 16. Sadler's Wells.
Cherry Ripe.	1881. Oxford Theatre.
A Bed of Roses.	1882, January 26. Globe Theatre.
The Silver King.	1882, November 16. Princess Theatre. (Olympic, January 3, 1891; Lyceum, September 2, 1899; Adelphi, January 21, 1903)
Breaking a Butterfly.	1884, March 3. Prince of Wales Theatre.
Chatterton.	1884, May 22. Princess Theatre.

Second Period: 1884-1891

Saints and Sinners.	1884, September 17 Greenwich, Prince of Wales Theatre.
Hoodman Blind.	1885, August 18. Princess Theatre.
The Lord Harry.	1886, February 18. Princess Theatre.

The Noble Vagabond.	1886, December. Princess Theatre.
Hard Hit.	1887, January 17. Haymarket Theatre.
Heart of Hearts.	1887, November 7. Vaudeville Theatre.
Wealth.	1889, April 27. Haymarket Theatre.
The Middleman.	1889, August 27. Shaftesburg Theatre.
Judah.	1890, May 21. Shaftesburg Theatre.
Sweet Will.	1890, July 25. Shaftesburg Theatre.
The Deacon.	1890, August 27. Shaftesburg Theatre.
The Dancing Girl.	1891, January 15. Haymarket Theatre.

Third Period: 1891-1904

The Crusaders.	1891, November 2. Avenue Theatre.
The Bauble Shop.	1893, January 26. Criterion Theatre.
The Tempter.	1893, September 20. Haymarket Theatre.
The Masqueraders.	1894, April 28. St. James's Theatre.
The Case of Rebellious Susan.	1894, October 3. Criterion.
The Triumph of the Philistines.	1895, May 11. St. James's Theatre.
Michael and his lost Angel.	1896, January 15. Lyceum Theatre.
The Rogue's Comedy.	1896, April 21. Garrick.
The Physician.	1897, March 25. Criterion.

The Liars.	1897, October 6. Criterion.
The Manoeuvres of Jane.	1898, October 29. Haymarket Theatre.
Carnac Sahib.	1899, April 12. His Majesty's Theatre.
The Lackey's Carnival.	1900, September 26. Duke of York's Theatre.
Mrs. Dane's Defence.	1900, October 2. Wyndham's Theatre.
The Princess's Nose.	1902, March 11. Duke of York's Theatre.
Chance, the Idol.	1902, September 9. Wyndham's Theatre.
Whitewashing Julia.	1903, March 2. Garrick.
Joseph Entangled.	1904, January 19. Haymarket Theatre.
The Chevalier.	1904, August 27. Garrick.
<u>Fourth Period: 1906-</u>	
The Heroic Stubbs.	1906, January 24. Terry's Theatre.
The Hypocrites.	1906, August 30. Hudson Theatre, New York.
The Goal.	1906. (Privately Printed.)
The Evangelist.	1907. (Privately Printed.)
Dolly Reforming Herself.	1908, November 3. Haymarket Theatre.
The Knife	1909, December 20. The Palace Theatre.
Fall in Rookies.	1910, October 24. The Alhambra.
We can't be as bad as all that.	1910, December, Nazimova Theatre.

The Ogre.

1911, September 11.
St. James's Theatre.

Lidya Gillmore.

1912, February.
Lyceum Theatre (New York.)

The Middleman. (A version specially
condensed by the Author.) The London Coliseum.

1912, March 25.

The Divine Gift

1912.

Mary Goes First

1914.
Comedy, New York.

The Lie

1914.
Hudson, New York.

III First Period: 1878-1884.

The first six years of Henry Arthur Jones' career as a playwright were years of apprenticeship. He was serving the managers, trying to write the kind of a play that would win their favorable consideration. He attempted three kinds, - short one-act plays, adaptations, and pure melodramas. The one-act plays predominated; of the eleven produced, six were strictly in this class, and two others were no longer in point of time but had two acts.

Harmony fairly represents his short pieces. Michael Kinsman, a blind old man of "sixty and over", has been organist in the little parish church for so many years that he feels that the organ and the position are peculiarly his. But Mr. Chesham loses all patience with him on account of his constant state of semi-intoxication; so he appoints Frank Seaton, a promising young man, in his place. Michael does not know Frank, but he thinks he hates him. Little does he suspect that Frank is in love with his daughter, Jennie. Indeed, Frank is so much in love that he braves the old man and promises to reinstate him as organist if he may have Jennie as his reward. Blindness prevents Michael from knowing that he is speaking with the despised organist, and he readily agrees to use Jennie as the purchasing price of his old position. Jennie naturally resents this bargain until she realizes she has been promised to Frank, then she cheerfully acquiesces. Michael's character undergoes rapid change, - he begs Frank and Jennie to forgive him; generously offers to let Frank play sometimes; talks sentimentally of Jennie's mother, who had died years before; and swears never to touch another drop. In his own words, he says: "I'll turn over a new leaf from this hour."¹ There is no regard for character growth. Michael's sudden

I. Harmony - H.A.Jones,
p. 18.

reformation is not sufficiently accounted for to satisfy us. Jennie had coaxed and begged her father time and again to leave off drink; Mr. Chesham had threatened him and finally removed him as organist, - neither had had any effect on his disposition or his morals. Even after he has his organ again, he feels for the tumbler: "My throat's as dry as a brick. ----- I must have it just this once, my dear - just this once - I'll be a teetotler to-morrow - yes, give it to me - make haste. I will have it!"¹ The effective speech that decides his reformation comes from Jennie when she refers to her mother: "Ah, think how pleased she would be if she saw you throw it away and promise never to drink again. For her sake, father, you will? You will?"² It is then he dashes the tumbler to the ground. Was the speech or the occasion one with enough revolutionizing force to result in this way? A crusty, stubborn old man of "sixty-six and over" is not easily or quickly converted to change his ways. Of this class of Jones' works little that is highly complimentary can be said. Archer remarks in his criticism of Clerical Error, a short play of this period - and it applies to all of them - "The motive is far from being new and in its working out there are a good many elements of the commonplace."³

Breaking a Butterfly belongs to the class of adaptations, having been arranged from Ibsen's Doll's House. The two plays develop in a parallel fashion up to the catastrophe. Mrs Goddard, like Nora, borrows money without her sick husband's knowledge in order to make a trip to Italy for the restoration of his health. She writes,

1. Harmony, H.A.Jones
p. 18.

2. Ibid.

3. English Dramatists of To-Day - Wm. Archer.
p. 221.

without realizing the significance of her deed, the signature of her dying father. The life of Humphrey Goddard having thus been saved, he is made some years later a bank director. The money lender is employed in this bank and is dismissed by the new director. He appeals to Mrs. Goddard to influence her husband to reinstate him, explaining the meaning of her past act. But her pleas are useless. Then a letter comes to the mail box in which the dismissed one tells the husband all and the conditions by which he can rectify the wife's deed. The young wife diverts her husband's attention from the letter as long as possible while she practices a tarantella. So far the plots are the same. Here Jones shows his lack of an understanding of Ibsen. He converts tragedy into a cheap comedy by using the happy ending. Humphrey Goddard does the thing that Nora evidently expected of Helmar; he takes the guilt of his wife's deed on himself. This forgiving conclusion ignores the ethical significance of Ibsen. With Ibsen the theme concerns the curbed development of Nora's individual personality. With Jones the theme concerns the expiation of guilt through a free acknowledgement of the truth. The other characters are poorly drawn. Dr. Rank does not appear. The children are repressed and a good scene is thus lost. Mrs. Linde is replaced by an old book-keeper. Jones himself is not proud of his effort. He admits that he did not understand Ibsen. Few copies are to be found of Breaking a Butterfly; my discussion has been based on a synopsis given by Teichmann in his Henry Arthur Jones' Dramen. An attempt to secure a copy was made by directly applying to Jones, but it was in vain. He writes this comment on it in reply: "It is quite a conventional early work, an adaptation of Ibsen's Doll's House, written before the Silver

King - it is only worth notice as the first adaptation into English of Ibsen."

The best play of this period was a pure melodrama, The Silver King. Archer calls it "quite the best of modern English melodramas." It has won success on the stage for thirty-three years, not only in England but in America, South Africa, Australia and on the continent. A synopsis is given here since traits of this selection are found in a large number of his later pieces. Wilfred Denver has lost heavily on the Derby races, and tries to drown the memory of his losses at a tavern. There, he becomes angry at a former suitor of his wife, an engineer, Geoffrey Ware; he even threatens to shoot him. Meanwhile, Captain Skinner, who is at the head of a band of thieves, is planning a burglary on the neighboring house of Ware. He wins Ware's secretary for his set. That night the secretary admits Captain Skinner and his assistants into Ware's house, so that they can bore into the money safe of the adjoining house. The intoxicated Denver appears and demands the engineer. In order not to attract the police, Skinner has Denver, who has come to shoot Ware, led into the darkened room and chloroformed. Ware, unexpectedly, returns, and goes to the window to summon help. Skinner shoots him with Denver's revolver and escapes with his accomplices. When Denver regains consciousness and sees the body of Ware, he imagines himself the murderer. He goes home, tells his wife, and she helps him to escape. He boards an express, narrowly escaping the detective who telegraphs to the next stop to have the guilty one arrested. During the trip Denver jumps from the train and gets away at the right time; for the train collides with another and the carriage in which he was riding burns. All think he was consumed in the flames. So Denver, reading the account of his death in the

newspaper, decides to assume another name and go to America. He remains in America three years and a half while his family lives in great need. He wins an immense fortune in a silver mine and sends his wife money which she does not receive. When he returns and learns of the financial distress of his family, he relieves it through a trusty old servant. This servant is sworn to reveal nothing of Denver's existence, since Denver would be handed over to the police. Denver continually puzzles over his crime which he cannot recollect. Then he discovers the man who showed him into Ware's room on the night of the murder. He follows him, is admitted into the den where the thieves meet. There, he learns by a quarrel of the thieves among themselves that Skinner is the murderer. Now Denver returns to his wife and Skinner is given over to the police.

All the characteristics of melodrama, as previously defined, are illustrated in The Silver King. Music is indicated thirty-six times in the stage directions. It is marked: "Music takes curtain up;" "Music to open;" "Music - Exit"; "Music-cue". It gives the signal for many of the beginnings and endings of scenes. Again it is used for its emotional effect, as in the following scene:

Denver: (Reading breathlessly.) --"Amongst the ill-fated passengers was Wilfred Denver"- Yes, it is here! - "paid the last penalty of his crime." Then I am dead - dead to all the world. Dead! Yes, dead! (Music) (Kneels.) Merciful Father, Thou hast heard my prayer and given me my life. I take it to give it back to Thee!

Only five times is music a stimulus to the emotions; the other thirty-one it indicates a particular time to the actors.

Sensationalism is prevalent throughout. Teichmann says: "The
1. The Silver King - R.A. Jones,
Act II - Scene IV - p. 62.

piece is full of improbabilities and impossibilities but undeniably clever in superstructure and theatrical effects."¹ One of the most improbable scenes is that in which Denver appears and is rendered unconscious by chloroform, then Ware comes and is shot by Skinner with the revolver Denver threatened to use. The scene in which Denver recovers consciousness is typical:

Denver: (Sees Ware) What's that? It's Geoffrey Ware! What's he doing here? Get up, will you? (Kneels down.) Ah, what's this? Blood! He's shot! My God, I've murdered him. No! No! Let me think. What happened? Ah, yes, I remember now - I came in at that door, he sprang at me and then we struggled. (Looking at revolver) My revolver. - One barrel fired - I've murdered him. No, he's not dead, Geoffrey Ware! Is he dead? (Eagerly feeling Ware's pulse) No, it doesn't beat. (Tears down Ware's waistcoat and shirt, puts his ear over Ware's heart.) No, No, quite still, quite still. He's dead! Dead! Oh, I've killed him - I've killed him. (Rising frantically, takes up revolver and puts it in his pocket.) What can I do? (With a great cry.) Don't stare at me like that! (Snatching off table cover and throwing it over body, his eyes fixed and staring at it unable to take off his glance.) Close those eyes, Geoffrey Ware - close them. Ah, yes, I murdered him - I've done it - I've done it - murdered him. (Exit, his lips mechanically jabbering.) I've done it! I've done it! I've done it! I've done it! (Music)²

There is too much chance in it for a serious play. Denver comes by

1. Henry Arthur Jones' Dramen-Teichmann
p. 20.

2. The Silver King - H.A.Jones,
Act I - Scene III, p. 36.

accident at the very moment the house is being robbed ; then Ware comes and is shot by the burglar who escapes. There is a certain element of probability in Denver's believing he is the murderer, since he entered intoxicated, having sworn to murder Ware. But Denver has not been driven to his mistake by any fault of his own, or by stern fate, - he is "the victim of circumstances controlled by the dramatist."¹ Tragedy permits no such mistake or co-incidence to plunge the hero to his downfall. Macbeth is not the victim of the dramatist but of his own weakness.

The characters ally themselves with melodrama. There is the typical villain who must be overcome by the hero; there is the heroine who must be happily united with the hero. Skinner is the cunning scoundrel, who for three years and a half after his murder of Ware is scot-free to execute other crimes through a band of thieves who are his tools. Denver, finally, asserts himself as the hero, having overheard Skinner's confession of the crime. Nelle Denver is, of course, the heroine; she has played a noble part in her care of her children, in her firm belief in her husband's innocence. The character development is neglected by the author. Seventeen short scenes hinder any close analysis of character, they permit only a hasty glimpse of a character in any situation. Therefore, it is the plot, and not the characters, that sticks. In Macbeth it is Macbeth and not the plot or incidents that remain with us. There is the essential difference between melodrama and tragedy.

Jones' method of bringing about a happy ending for The Silver King is a trifle lame. Denver has been admitted to the rendezvous

1. The British and American Drama of To-day - Barrett H. Clark.
p. 39.

of the rascals to run errands and guard the booty; he is only a "thick-headed hoddy-dod" who can bear no tales. Hidden behind the bales he listens with great interest. The men quarrel among themselves and a scuffle follows. Then Denver hears Skinner say:

Skinner: Curse you, will you never give me peace till I kill you?¹

Then comes the sentence that solves the whole puzzle.

Corkett: Yes, as you killed Geoffrey Ware!¹

Denver with a scream of joy betrays himself, but makes his escape. Again the happy ending is the result of too much manipulation by the dramatist.

The Silver King deserves its place as good melodrama, Jones pretended to have written no serious play when he wrote The Silver King. The plot is interesting, and succeeds in holding the attention of the audience by its simplicity and sincerity.

William Archer's criticism of Robertson's work may be applied to this period. "Yet withal what a trifling and flimsy work it is! It takes no hold of real life, it illustrates no point in dramatic art, except the possibility of keeping an audience of Britains amused for two hours with cleverly flippant and feebly sentimental small-talk."²

In this period Jones lacks reliance on his own originality and judgment. He freely borrows ideas from others for his plots, he collaborates with writers, he adapts plays. He leans too heavily to have derived lasting fame for his writing in these years.

1. The Silver King - H.A.J.
Act IV - Scene IV - p. 142.

2. English Dramatist of To-day - Archer
p. 25

IV. Second Period: 1884-1891

In 1884 Jones produced one of his best plays, Saints and Sinners, which may be said to mark the beginning of a second period, since it is the first one to deal with a problem. This characteristic of Jones' new dramatic class is limited to four plays in the period; for Hoodman Blind, Heart of Hearts, Sweet Will, and others revert to his early works in their themes and their development. The four that deserve a new classification because of their themes are: Saints and Sinners, The Middleman, Judah, and The Dancing Girl.

With a bound Jones arises to Saints and Sinners, a play with literary merit, in which the theme is the inconsistency between religious confession and conduct of modern middle class Englishmen. He shows religious fervour that covers a host of sham and hypocrisy. It is the story of the betrayal of Pastor Fletcher's daughter, Letty, by Captain Fanshawe. The pastor wishes to conceal the mistake of his daughter, but is prevented through the joint knowledge of two influential parishioners, Hoggard and Pramble, who attend worship regularly with Bible and hymn book and wear a reverent Sabbath aspect to make amends for the six days of close business dealing. Pastor Fletcher can buy their silence by accepting a false valuation of property, belonging to a widow, and for which he is trustee. After a struggle he refuses the bribe and accepts the condition of a public confession which means the loss of his church. The confession scene offered great dramatic possibilities and Jones proved himself able to infuse it with life and emotion.

Thus far Jones shunned melodrama, but in the next act he falters. Four years have elapsed since the release of Pastor Fletcher

from his charge. During that time Letty has entirely redeemed her past by nursing rich and poor through an epidemic of fever that has swept the town. Now, she herself lies ill and her father finds it hard to keep the wolf from the door. At this critical point Jones intercedes for the pastor. Hoggard, who is wanted by the police, comes to the forgiving pastor for help; which Pastor Fletcher tries to give, but fails. Not only is the pastor given this opportunity for revenge, but he is invited back to his old congregation and Letty with him. Here Jones checks the movement toward a happy conclusion, for he has Letty die in the arms of a former suitor. He had thought that to have her marry happily would be a sacrifice of reality, but after one performance, he was won over to change the ending. He says in excuse: "The death scene proving too sad for the genial association of the theatre where it was performed, I accepted a kind suggestion from a well-known critic, and changed the last scene into a happy union between Letty and George. I did this with some reluctance, but I reflected that on the whole the final dénouement was not of such vital importance as the presentation of the picture of English religious life. I do not think I shall be harshly judged by those who understand what have been the inner conditions of writing for the English Stage and the concessions demanded by the public until quite recently."¹

Jones' own account of his effort to be independent of stage-managers shows that the last scene was the unavoidable result of his early training. He says: "After I had obtained a great financial success in melodrama, and was temporarily in a position to write a play to please myself rather than to suit the exigencies

I. Preface to Saints and Sinners.
pp. XXIII-XXIV.

of a theatrical manager, I gave many months to the writing of "Saints and Sinners. I was not then very well acquainted with all the many necessities of theatrical production, and the niceties and peculiarities of audiences at particular theatres, and I confidently reckoned upon as great a success in my new venture as I had just obtained in what I knew to be the cheaper and coarser art of melodrama. But at the outset the piece was very dubiously received, and the general impression obtained in theatrical circles that I had only proved my incompetence to write plays away from the theatrical leading strings which had hitherto guided me. And before I knew that the piece had settled into an assured success, I had weakly sold myself to what the Saturday Review justly calls, 'the dull devil of spectacular melodrama.' And I remained a bondslave for many years."¹

Jones not only is persuaded to use the happy ending, but he employs music as a melodramatic device. He has children singing hymns in the distance at the Sunday School picnic from which Letty is carried off by Captain Fanshawe. He, also, has a voluntary played on the harmonium in the chapel while the congregation gathers. The purpose of the voluntary is to create an atmosphere for the confession scene which followed.

In spite of unfavorable criticisms of Jones' selection of a religious theme and of his use of melodrama, no less a critic than Matthew Arnold writes him a letter expressing his hearty commendation, which reads in part: "I went to see Saints and Sinners, and my interest was kept up through out as I expected. You have remarkably the art - so valuable in drama - of exciting interest and

I. Preface to Saints and Sinners
p. XVIII.

and sustaining it. The piece is full of good and telling things and one cannot watch the audience without seeing that by strokes of this kind of faith in middle-class fetish is weakened, however slowly, as it could be in no other way."¹

Jones deserves the praise, for he has faithfully represented some well-known types of modern middle-class Englishmen. Hoggard is not a caricature, but a man whom you might meet upon the street. Pastor Fletcher is a relief that life often offers for the bigoted money-making type; in this play he is the relief for the heartless Hoggard. We see then that character is quite as important as plot in Saints and Sinners, in spite of the fact that Captain Fanshawe is a wicked baronet of the villain class and Letty is a typical persecuted heroine.

In Jones' Preface to Saints and Sinners he says that he was afterwards to be a bondslave to melodrama for many years. The Middleman, which appeared five years later is included in the period of servitude. The title leads one to expect a sericus study of producer, middleman, and consumer. The plot of the play does not even center about the middleman, Chandler, who reaps all the profits from Blenkarn's inventive genius, but about the inventor who has worked for twenty years to discover the secret of the old Tatlow ware. When he no longer has money to buy coal with which to fire his kilns, he breaks up the furniture to use as fuel. This scene in which he discovers that one vase has repaid his labor and sacrifice verges strongly toward melodrama. His screams of delight, his hysterical laughter as he rocks to and fro, having realized the results of his years of labor, mark the climax of the play by a sensational stroke. It is a plot with little character delineation,

I. Preface to Saints and Sinners.

p. XXIV.

even Blenkarn is too eccentric for us to sympathize with as we coldly analyze him off stage. Jones gives the chapters the following headings that are characteristic of melodrama: "Caterpillars of the Commonwealth"; "My Daughter! What of her?"; "A Waxen Image 'gainst a Fire"; "The Wheel is come Full Circle". The plot, however, has fire and passion, and sufficient variety to stimulate the spectators. We are told that on August 27, 1889 in a memorable performance it was presented to a thoroughly sympathetic audience with E.S.Williard starring as Blenkarn.

On the other hand, in Judah each character has distinct individuality, each is a breathing human being. It is a strange fact that Jones could remain so faithful to his purpose with the best materials for melodrama available. Faith healing and fasting offer an opportunity for the most exaggerated situations, the most thrilling incidents. The subject could so easily degenerate into the vulgar and common, but it is nobly and ably treated. A synopsis is here given to show the pitfalls that might so easily have rendered Judah a sentimental melodrama. Vashti Lethic is forced by her father to work cures by faith healing. To complete these seeming miracles she undergoes long periods of fasting. She undertakes to heal the sick daughter of the Earl of Asgarby, and is watched by the skeptical Professor Jopp to see that she takes no food. Judah Llewellyn, the pastor of the place, who is in love with her, believes in her until he surprises the father as he comes with food to refresh his hungry daughter. Professor Jopp and others hear the voice of Vashti's father and rush to the scene. Judah, in order to save the reputation of the girl whose fraud he has discovered, swears that no one has brought her food. The

last act shows the struggle in Judah's soul and his final victory that results in open confession.

The trace of melodrama, if such it may be called, is at the close of the second act, when the father tries to run the blockade with food, and various couples play blindman's buff in evening dress around Vashti's prison door. The situation would seem highly improbable, even ridiculous, but Jones makes his spectators realize that the physical position of the characters is not the center of interest but the spiritual struggle. Here it is that Judah discovers Vashti to be something less than angel, and yet he is saved from any revulsion of feeling by the pity she awakens in him when he hears her story.

Vashti Dethic is the most composite character Jones has created. She is not a common adventuress, for there is something saintly in the hypocritical part which she is heartily sick of acting, but is forced by her father to continue. She tries to believe in her mission, to believe she is helping the mind of the sick girl to affect a cure on the ailing body. Her power over Judah, a strange mixture of Jew and Celt, is not a trick. He shares deliberately her deception and comes to exult in the self-abasement that brings him so closely in touch with her.

The essence of the play is not plot but character, it is a study of motives. So far it is Jones' most serious play in which he mounts highest in his literary career. But melodrama does not disappear from his writings with the success of Judah.

The Dancing Girl is the fourth and last of the worthy plays of this period. The plot has more color than any that precedes it, and shows clearly the effect of melodrama in marring an otherwise

charming play. The rise in interest is steady, the style has a realistically human touch up to Act IV; but the whole last act is an anti-climax.

Drusilla Ives is a girl with an unusual amount of health and strength and beauty who has lived in a simple Quaker family on a small island. In her own words she tells her father of the result of the cramped feeling she had: "Your mean narrow life stifled me, crushed me! I couldn't breathe in it! I wanted a larger, freer, wider life - I was perishing for want of it! I've kept up a life of deception for five years to spare your pain - for your sake - not for mine!-----You and I live in a different world - all the old things have gone - the very words you use - righteousness, repentance, and the rest seem strange to me! I have forgotten them - they are no longer in use - they are old-fashioned and out-worn!"¹

Thus she has been driven in her desperation to a life of deception, as a dancing girl in London, where she is admired and applauded under the name of Diana Valrose. There, she enjoys using her power to attract and fascinate men, even plain John Christison whom she knew in girlhood.

Her dancing scenes are not lacking in success. In the first one John sees her performing a new shadow dance in the moon-light and rushes out in amazement and chagrin, exclaiming, "Woman! What art thou!"² In this scene John discovers her true nature. In her next dancing act, her father learns for the first time how far she has strayed from her early training.

1. The Dancing Girl
Act III-Scene I - pp. 99-100.
2. The Dancing Girl
Act I - p. 46.

Drusilla charms not only John Christison but as sophisticated a man as the Duke of Guisebury, who describes her as "two-thirds delightful Quaker innocence, and one-third the devil's own wit and mischief." After years together, Guisebury asks her to marry him. Her reply is typical:

"We've had our cake and eaten it - Now the feast is over and there's nothing to do but to say good-bye and part friends." Then the Duke gives a last farewell party in her honor. When she appears in a maddening dress to dance before the assembled guests, she sees her father. The guests depart in confusion at the request of the father who is grief stricken over his daughter's worldliness. Then he denounces her and she goes to die unconfessed in a convent. Guisebury, on the other hand, reforms; he builds break waters on the island to protect the people.

The first three acts never lose their grip on the audience. But the fourth is as weak as the first three are strong. We have no interest in Drusilla's death and the marvellous reforms of Guisebury which are recounted in the last act. These events add nothing to the story, and give no further revelation of character. We can explain the act only as an evident effort to end the story satisfactorily by rewarding the good people of the island and punishing the wicked Drusilla.

The second period attempts some criticism of life, succeeds in part and again fails utterly. Of the four plays herein considered Judah is Jones' best and most serious one, the farthest removed from melodrama. In Saints and Sinners he arrives at a fair measure of success in avoiding melodrama, but slips back in The Middleman. Again he leaves it in Judah to return to it in the last act of The Dancing Girl.

V. Third Period: 1891-1904

In the third period, Jones is at the height of his power; it is then that he proves himself one of the first of living dramatists. It is, also, his most fruitful period, when he produces nineteen works in thirteen years.

Many of these fall outside the melodramatic class; because now he often attempts pure comedy. The first work is The Crusaders, which is a satirical romance, satirizing attempts at social reform in London by the upper middle class. But The Bauble Shop, The Masqueraders, Carnac Sahib and Chance, the Idol, have strong melodramatic tendencies which connect them with the preceding period. Copies of The Bauble Shop, Chance the Idol, The Chevalier and The Lackey's Carnival were not available for my examination, so that any criticism would be merely an echo.

The Tempter, which is next in order after The Bauble Shop, stands alone from Jones' other plays, since it is written in blank verse. It was in no sense a successful tragedy, although it ran seventy-three nights. But the cost of staging was so great that the run only covered the expenses, one of the greatest of which was putting a real ship upon the stage that would not work or sail or sink. Jones was angered at the reception of the piece and took occasion to express his opinion of first night judgment that ruined plays. He also sharply replied to an adverse criticism made by William Archer on the play, saying: "As a critic he (Mr. Archer) is deserving of very great respect, for though it must be sorrowfully conceded that his instincts in dramatic matters are always wrong, it can honestly be claimed for him that his judgements are sometimes right." In theme The Tempter is similar to Marlowe's Dr. Faustus or Goethe's Faust; for the tempter is the devil who is

filled with hatred for all humankind. Prince Leo is on board a ship in a terrible storm on his way to marry his cousin, Lady Avis, to whom he has been engaged from his twelfth year. The Devil appears at the stern and brings the ship on the rocks, although the life of the prince is saved. Meanwhile Lady Avis with her father and cousin, Lady Isobel, is on the way to Canterbury, where Lady Isobel is to take the veil and Lady Avis is to marry the prince. The Prince meets them, conceals his identity, and finally through the influence of the Devil falls in love with Lady Isobel. Later, the Prince seeks Isobel in her room at night. The next day the Devil tells the Prince he is only one of many of Isabel's suitors; and then tells Isobel, indirectly, that she is being loosely discussed by every one. Isobel in anger comes to the Prince and stabs him, whereupon he reveals himself in the presence of Avis, who forgives both the lover and cousin. The prince is borne to Canterbury where the Devil has placed all in deep slumber. While they wait to gain admittance to the cathedral, the Devil tries to take the soul of the dying one, shouting "Thy God is dead". But the doors of the cathedral are opened and the Prince dies at peace and Isobel with him; for she has stabbed herself that she may not be separated from him in death.

The Tempter is called a tragedy and is, in the sense that the hero and heroine die. But it differs from ordinary tragedy, too, because the Devil or villain is defeated in the struggle, which is after all the heart of the play. Music, which comes from pilgrims in the chapel as they sing vesper hymns is frequently used. The play is clearly melodramatic too in that it develops no character for us. The Devil is the weakest character in the play and

resembles Vice in the old moralities. He is portrayed as a vague, mysterious, terrible being, yet possessed of human characteristics in order that we might grasp any conception of him. The other characters are puppets to his will until the close of the play, when the souls of Lady Isobel and the Prince are wrested from his grasp. The tragedy cannot but be spectacular and sensational throughout. It is a play that must be excepted from any usual classification, but it is a melodrama and not a successful one. Jones had undertaken a difficult work, which he could not do well and yet he was loath to admit any failure.

The Masqueraders is an interesting example of Jones' tendency to slip back into his early methods. Dulcie Larondie, of good family but an orphan in reduced circumstances, is serving as a bar-maid in the Stag Hotel. She is loved by two very different men, Sir Brice who in his forty-two years has seen much of the world; and David Remon a pale, studious astronomer. Of the two she selects Sir Brice. Perhaps she is won by the thought of a title for she says in announcing her engagement to David: "I'm to be Lady Skene - won't you congratulate me?"¹ After three years and a half Lady Skene is again presented to us in her own drawing room as hostess. The guests discuss her unfortunate marriage to a man who drinks and who has lost by gambling all his fortune. David Remon is present as an understanding friend. His speech is tender and full of feeling: "Your trouble isn't real. This society world of yours isn't a real world. There's one little star in Andromeda where everything is real. You've wandered down here amongst these

1. The Masqueraders.
Act I - p. 38.

shadows when you should have stayed at home."¹ Lady Skene is pleased at the suggestion and asks "Aren't these real women?"¹ His reply is worth quoting: "No, They are only masquerading. Good God, I think we are all masquerading! Look at them! If you touched them with reality they would vanish. And so with your trouble tonight. Fly back to Andromeda, and you will see what a dream all this is."¹ When he sees her later with her little daughter, he says mother love is real; and he is, also, forced to admit the reality of duty. When Sir Brice brutally demands money from Lady Skene and suggests she get it from Remon who admires her, she raises her fan to strike him. Remon overhears the conversation and urges her to write cheques upon him to any extent. Nine months elapse in which Sir Brice lives upon Remon. At last Lady Skene can bear it no longer and refuses to accept the money. Then follows a sensational and exciting scene in which Remon and Sir Brice play for high stakes - Lady Brice and child are staked against Remon's remaining fortune. The scene is one of tense playing in which David wins the wife and child. The result is inevitable, for Jones never forgets the ethics of morality. Remon carries Dulcie off to a home in the Alps, throws away her wedding ring and yet they both realize the truth, - they can not live happily together. The curtain falls upon their farewell as David stands in the full morning light, with the snow covered mountains in the rear and as Dulcie stands with her child clasped in her arms, her face hidden.

Jones was forced to recognize the necessity for such an ending which can not be called happy. It is a sentimentally romantic

1. The Masqueraders.
Act II - p. 57.

one. All other elements of melodrama are fully developed in The Masqueraders. It is a plot play made up of sensational scenes. The proposal scene in the bar-room after auctioning off a kiss from Dulcie at three thousand guineas; scenes of uncontrolled wrath between Sir Brice and wife; the game that decided the future for Lady Skene are among the most exaggerated. Bright dance music is introduced in the bar-room scene at three different times. The play is interesting but rather commonplace in subject and decidedly melodramatic.

Jones shows a marked characteristic of his in his next play, - The Case of Rebellious Susan, which is pure comedy. He has this ability to follow a bad play with one of unusual merit. Next in order comes The Triumph of the Philistines which has the same theme as Saints and Sinners, the hypocrisies of a Puritanic little town, - but is not as successful. Since these plays are comedies they do not concern us in this investigation. To this list must be added other comedies such as The Liars, "one of the finest examples of the comedy of manners in England during the past quarter of a century."¹

Michael and his Lost Angel, the next play, gives the soul struggle of a pastor as in Judah and Saints and Sinners. The Reverend Michael Feversham makes Rose Gibbard confess publicly in the church to a crime which he believes to be deadly. Then into his life comes Audrie Lesden, a woman who is separated from her husband and enjoys the ways of the world. She seeks to attract Michael by seeming to consult him in a time of need; while in his

1. The British and American Drama of To-day - Barrett H. Clark.
p. 44.

parlor she kisses the picture of his mother whom he calls "his good angel". In the second act Michael is visited by Audrie on an island and commits the deadly sin himself. It takes some time for him to summon sufficient courage to make a public confession, such as he had deemed necessary for Rose Gibbard; afterwards he seeks refuge in a cloister in Italy. Audrie who is broken in body and soul, seeks Michael in the monastery in order to die there in his arms. It is another of Jones' plays that failed on its first night and was received with booing and hissing. This misfortune, Jones thought was due to attendant circumstances rather than to the play. It is a play that has created much comment. Joseph Knight was ready to pronounce it "in the full sense a masterpiece".¹ Bernard Shaw's criticism was as follows: "It seems ----- to me to be a genuinely sincere and moving play, feelingly imagined, written with knowledge as to the man and insight as to the woman by an author equipped not only with the experience of an adept playwright, and a kindly and humorous observer's sense of contemporary manners, but with that knowledge of spiritual history in which Jones' nearest competitors seem so stupendously deficient."² He explains its failure too by these words: "The melancholy truth of the matter is that the English stage got a good play, and was completely and ignominiously beaten by it."²

The play employs melodramatic devices, among them the use of music. During the confession of Rose Gibbard a penitential hymn, with organ accompaniment, is sung in church. To create the atmosphere for the third act we are given the following scene: The

1. Preface to Michael and his Lost Angel - Joseph Knight.

p. XXI.

2. The British and American Drama of To-day - Barrett H. Clark.
p. 40.

Chancel of the Minster Church of Saint Decuman at Clevedon, a beautiful building of Decorated Gothic architecture. ----- Large brass candlesticks on altar with lighted candles. Time about nine on an autumn night. An organ voluntary is being played as the curtain rises. Enter Michael, from transept. He has aged much, is very pale and emaciated. The voluntary ceases. Before the confessional scene of Michael there is the peal of church bells, followed by organ music and singing, then a processional hymn while the surpliced priests file up the aisle. During the last scene of Audrie's life a vesper hymn is heard in the distance. Music never played a more dramatic part in touching up the sad scenes to strongest pathos.

The characters are of equal interest with the plot, although in portraying Michael, Jones is often thought to have faltered in the third Act. Michael and Audrie have been discussing their sin.

Audrie: You're sorry?

Michael: No - and you?

Audrie: No.¹

Some casual remarks made later cause her to doubt the sincerity of his statement and again she accuses him:

Audrie: Ah, you're sorry!

Michael: No, I'm strangely happy and - dazed. I feel nothing, except my great joy, and a curious bitter amusement in tracing it all out.²

In spite of his affirmations that he is not sorry, he makes a

1. Michael and his Lost Angel.
Act III - p. 55.

2. Michael and his Lost Angel.
Act III - p. 58.

contrite confession of his sins. "I can find no repentance," he says, "and no peace till I have freely acknowledge to you all that I am not worthy to continue my sacred office, not worthy to be the channel of grace to you. It was the dearest wish of my life to restore this beautiful temple, and to be Heaven's vicar here. I have raised it again, but I may not enter. I dare not enter. I have sinned - as David sinned. I have broken the sanctity of the marriage vow. It is my just sentence to go forth from you, not as your guide, your leader, your priest; but as a broken sinner, humbled in the dust before the Heaven he has offended. I bid you all farewell."¹ His confession sounds like that of a truly penitent man whose heart is full of remorse, and yet ten months later he takes out a faded red rose which he has preserved, showing he treasured her memory.

The ending is not a happy one but yet is melodramatic. It is a sentimental scene for which we can find little excuse. Why should Audrie follow him to Italy to die thus? Why was she dying at all? It adds nothing to the play in character study. Perhaps that critic was correct who said it was for the purpose of making the audience cry.

Shaw thinks Jones made a mistake in delineating the character of Michael, since Michael should be sorry if his code and creed are to agree, but he says he is glad, then turns about and confesses humbly, and is finally seen kissing the lips, the face, the hands, the dress of the dying Audrie which is not the part of a remorseful sinner. But I doubt if Jones ever meant to make Michael a contrite

1. Michael and his Lost Angel.
Act IV - p. 94.

penitent, rather a man struggling to act in accord with his conscience. Of the bad angel, who does the love making, Jones has made a consistent picture, if a woman who is possessed of some of the fine things and some of the bold, a woman who is both tender and feminine, yet is bitter and aggressive in love, can ever be consistent. She is, however, a reality.

And finally, is Michael and his Lost Angel sensational? In a scene already referred to where it is evening and music plays, the combination is such as to give a sensational turn. Yet the melodramatic devices do not spoil this play, which is one of Jones' masterpieces and is deserving of great praise.

The Rogue's Comedy, The Manoeuvres of Jane and The Princesses' Nose are often termed "farces", so that they are quite out of the class here considered. All are poor comedies that have never been highly praised. I, therefore, pass over them to the next serious play - The Physician. Dr. Lewin Carey, a nerve specialist, gives up a large London practice, because he has had experiences that make life seem insipid. He is persuaded to go to Fontleas by the pastor's daughter there, Edana Hinde. There he has promised to treat Edana's betrothed, Walter Amphiel. Dr. Carey soon recognizes that Amphiel, who is a temperance lecturer, is himself an alcoholic. He lives with him and for six months keeps him from the alcohol; then Amphiel disappears. While he is gone, Dr. Carey has a detective trace his movements and learns thereby that Amphiel is spending his time in the worst part of Bristol. Meanwhile Dr. Carey begins to love Edana Hinde and has to admit that he is not properly sorry to know that Amphiel is a scoundrel. When Amphiel returns, he at first says he has been on a temperance tour, but soon he learns

that Dr. Carey has definite knowledge of what he has been doing. He pleads for one more chance to redeem himself and is taken to India by Dr. Carey. Edana Hinde, unknown to the others, has overheard the conversation in which Amphiel reveals his weakness. Her love for him disappears and she is greatly perplexed over her promise to marry him upon his return. Dr. Carey returns after nine months' absence but he is alone. Amphiel has contracted pneumonia and died, so that Edana and Dr. Carey are free to marry.

The plot is varied and unusually interesting. Here Jones displays much skill in the scenes which lead up to the climax. The characterization, however, is very weak, that of the doctor being conspicuously so. He speaks often not as a doctor, for there is no professional attitude.

Dr. Carey: (Hesitates for a few moments. He looks very searchingly at Amphiel, siezes Amphiel's hands, makes Amphiel look at him. Hymn in church.) Will you put yourself in my hands from this moment? Will you give yourself over to me, do as I bid you, be guided by me in everything, till I have done my best to heal you, made a new man of you, so far as that is possible? Will you do it?

Amphiel: Yes, yes - anything. And you'll save me from myself?

Dr. Carey: Trust to me. Whatever human skill and patience can do, I'll do for you, and I'll never leave you while there's a hope that I can drag you out of this mire and make you fit to hold up your head before all men, and before her! Trust to me, my poor lad, trust to me!¹

1. The Physician.
Act III - p.

This speech is representative of many scenes in which the conversation weakly shows character and in which music is used. The ending is the typical happy one, for it brings together the hero and heroine in circumstances that make it possible for their marriage. The plot too has strong melodramatic tendencies that prevent it from ranking as one of Jones' best.

Mrs. Dane's Defence shows Jones at his best in one act. Lionel Carteret, the adopted son of Sir Daniel Carteret, meets Mrs. Dane, a charming woman whom he learns to love. About Mrs. Dane's former life little is known, she has entered society and won a considerable circle of masculine admirers and Mrs. Bulsom-Porter's hatred as well. Mrs. Bulsom-Porter is therefore ready to seize the suggestion of her nephew that he has known a Miss Hindermarsh resembling Mrs. Dane, about whom a scandal had been circulated while she was employed as governess in Vienna. To be sure, the nephew tries to convince his aunt that he was mistaken, but she employs a private detective to ferret out the scandal. Meanwhile Mrs. Dane is persuaded to place her case in the hands of the judge, Sir Daniel. The private detective declares there is no evidence whatever on which he can convict her, which disappoints Mrs. Bulsom-Porter. Mrs. Dane believes she has cleared herself; then in a cross-examination by Sir Daniel condemns herself by one slip. At first Lionel cannot believe what Sir Daniel tells him and will marry him anyway. When Sir Daniel like a true father tells him the story of his mother whom Sir Daniel loved and gave up, he wins Lionel's promise to go to Egypt and forget. Mrs. Bulsom-Porter apologizes humbly for the accusation which she now believes was unjust; and Mrs. Dane's little secret remains a secret to all but

those immediately concerned.

It is a serious play minus any detrimental touch of melodrama. Only once is music introduced, not the favorite organ voluntary or hymn sung in church, but dance music heard in the distance. This use occurs when the accusation against Mrs. Dane is made for the first time. The play has one great act, the third; and the others are either prefatory or conclusive. There is too much explanation for the third act. The fourth act is, therefore, an anti-climax, foretelling future events of which we are already sure. Although the great act is such as one might see in any court room, it is a masterfully realistic scene in which the audience feels the "moral torture" of Mrs. Dane as she is slowly brought to her self-condemning sentence. The judge has already congratulated Mrs. Dane for her freedom from scandal and welcomed her into his family as the wife of his adopted son; then he suggests she visit her girl-hood home and thus remove the last vestige of suspicion. The judge asks her questions which are suavely answered. Then comes the slip.

Sir D: Did you go to school?

Mrs. D: No. We had governesses.

Sir D: "We?" You said you were an only child. Who's "we"?¹ It is merely "we" instead of "I", but Mrs. Dane at once realizes the doubt in the judge; she hesitates, she is uncertain in her answers until she sees it is useless for her to continue.

Mrs. D: (after a considerable pause) You're angry with me?

Sir D: Not angry. But grieved, deeply grieved that you hadn't

1. Mrs. Dane's Defense.
Act II - p. 85.

the courage to tell me the truth.

She has now admitted that Felicia Hindermarsh is her cousin, but it is some time before she is completely vanquished and tells the judge she is Felicia Hindermarsh. J.T. Grein gives a valuable criticism of the presentation of Mrs. Dane's Defence by Miss Lena Ashwell and Charles Wyndham that reveals its possibilities for dramatic conversation. He calls attention to Miss Ashwell's manner while she is cross-examined, "now hopeful, now defiant, now wavering, now despondent, with broken breath and restless erring eyes she met the charges of her torturer till 'Woman, you're lying! You are Felicia Hindermarsh!'" Then he writes in appreciative style of Wyndham's insinuating force, dulcet manner, screwing, digging voice which made the audience long to plead for mercy in behalf of Mrs. Dane. We must not belittle Jones' ability by giving the actors all the credit; for it is Jones' brain which furnished the material and yet failed to maintain a balance between this colossal scene and the others.

White-washing Julia appeared less than a year later; in theme it is similar to Mrs. Dane's Defence. Julia Wren, like Mrs. Dane, moves into a new neighborhood where people refuse to recognize her socially. The plot differs from that of Mrs. Dane's Defence in that we never know whether Mrs. Wren is guilty or not; she writes a letter containing a full explanation and gives it to Stillingfleet who destroys it to show his trust in her. The plot is not so intense, but just as realistic; perhaps there is less of character development, but one would not call it melodrama.

Joseph Entangled has much the same plot as The Liars, only in The Liars the heroine, Lady Jessica, tells lies which no one

believes, and in Joseph Entangled, Lady Verona tells the truth which no one believes. Sir Joseph Lacy is locked out of his rooms, stays during the night at Hardolph Mayne's. When Mayne returns he learns Sir Joseph breakfasted with his wife, Lady Verona. He places the worst interpretation upon an innocent affair. The servant who admits Sir Joseph, assures him that Lady Verona and husband are both out of town, for he does not know Lady Verona has been called in on business of a nature that demands secrecy, so that it is a surprise to both to have met at breakfast. It is altogether a plot play with several sensational scenes.

The third period established Jones' claim to first rank among modern dramatists. His comedies show his ability to originate and develop plots and to create live characters. It is in his attempts at tragedy that he exhibits his weakness; as for example in Michael and his Lost Angel or The Tempter.

VI. Fourth Period: 1906-1912

During the years of his fourth and last period Jones' literary productions show, on the whole, less originality and less strength than those in either the second or third period. It is an anti-climactic stage in his life, just as the last act often is in his dramas. We might say he had exhausted himself, and had no more ideas, but that in the last plays he has partially recovered his former art. This fact leads us to contribute his relapse to an illness; for, since he has regained his strength, he is regaining his power as a writer.

The Hypocrites, which is among the first, held the stage for a long run in New York; but received no applause in London. Its theme is the same as that of Saints and Sinners, The Triumph of the Philistines, and others, - that is, the hypocrisies of society. In The Hypocrites a Mr. Wilmore insists that one of his tenants marry a girl for whose seduction the tenant is responsible. The pastor of the place, a sincere but unpolitic man, objects to this solution. And Wilmore, himself, has a very different viewpoint when his son is implicated in a like affair; he realizes it would ruin the son's chance for a desirable marriage that has been arranged for him and therefore he hurries the unfortunate girl to the train. But on the way to the station she sprains her ankle, and is taken into the home of the pastor, who learns her whole story. Then the pastor urges that the son explain everything to his betrothed, Helen; at first the son maintains an air of innocence, but finally breaks down under the cross-examination and admits his guilt. Mr. Wilmore grieves over the discovery of his son's sin, for he himself loses the honorable record of a lifetime, laboriously

spent in advancing the highest morality and soundest Churchmanship amongst our neighbors."¹ Then he consoles himself, like the good hypocrite he is, with the statement: "I can honestly say I've acted throughout according to the dictates of my conscience."² The last act is employed in adjusting matters for the happy ending. The son is suddenly possessed with the idea of marrying the girl he has wronged. He pleads her cause to his mother, who resolutely refuses to consider her as a possible daughter-in-law. Then, without any preparation for her change of heart, we hear the mother with outstretched arms saying, "Come to me, my dear -". Jones has reached the happy ending, - all of which we anticipated before the rise of the curtain on the last act.

Nothing praiseworthy is accomplished here in characterization; the people are types who speak lines that have little appeal to our emotions. The plot might awaken more interest if we had not seen Jones develop ones so like it. Because he uses no new tricks our imaginations can precede our eyes in the actual working out of events; consequently, our enthusiasm lags.

Music is introduced. Helen plays discords and disjointed phrases on the piano as she voices her suspicions to her finance that something is wrong, that something is being concealed from her. The music has a subtle suggestiveness; but, nevertheless, it is a melodramatic device. We are forced to admit Jones gave nothing meritorious to the theatre in The Hypocrites, that it bears the marks of melodrama.

Then came The Goal, which is rightly called a "dramatic

1. The Hypocrites.
Act IV - p. 152.
2. The Hypocrites.
Act IV - p. 154.

fragment", since it is so short. It is the story of Sir Stephen Farniss, a distinguished engineer, who dies leaving unfinished his great dream of making it possible to travel from England to America in four days. While he lies in his chamber, knowing life is almost gone and yet loath to leave the fight which he has so enjoyed, Peggy Lovel, a débutante of eighteen, enters in her first ball dress. He admires her fresh girlish loveliness, and loves her because she bears his wife's name. The presence of Peggy in the sick room arrayed for a dance is the background for such a scene as Jones enjoys depicting. Next comes a reconciliation between the stern engineer and his son; but before the father can fully outline to his son his great plans, he dies. His last speech is worth quoting because it shows Jones' melodramatic tendency when he approaches tragedy.

Sir Stephen: The end, Dan. (His face shows that he is suffering great pain. A great burst of dance music. They offer to support him. He waves them off.) No, thank you. I'll die standing. England to America in four days. (Long pause. He stands bolt upright with great determination.) You were wrong about those grinders, Dan - My Peggy - I wonder if it's all moonshine - Peggy - My Peggy - (Dies, tumbles over table. Music and dancing in ballroom louder than ever.)

Accompanying a death scene with dance music is highly melodramatic. In fact melodrama asserts itself rather strongly throughout the play. To present a dying man conversing about fashions with a girl, as if the subject were one of momentous importance,

1. The Goal, in The Theatre of Ideas.
p. 125.

is sensational. To follow this up with the patching up of a quarrel that has estranged father and son for years; and to add to this a death scene with echoes from the ballroom is to veer from tragedy into melodrama.

Jones was thus returning to his early technique. Perhaps he realized his inability to produce a serious play, and deliberately avoided it by turning to comedy. At any rate he wrote next some good comedies, such as Dolly Reforming Herself, and Mary Goes First. Since these lie outside the realm of melodrama, they are not significant here, unless, as has been suggested, they are an admission of his failure at serious plays.

In the latter part of this period Jones again tried graver plays. In 1913 he produced The Divine Gift, which is interesting to read, but I doubt its success on the stage although I find no record of its production. It progresses too slowly; neither the speech nor action carries it to its conclusion as rapidly as we wish. It is not melodrama in any sense; but a serious play that sometimes is insipid and monotonous.

In brief the theme is that of two women who imagine themselves very unhappy, but each other enviably happy. Evie Janway, with a good husband, seeks a divorce in order to develop her voice. Lora Delmar, with a divine gift of voice, seeks love and a home. Both fail in their hopes, - Evie returns to her husband, and Lora accepts singing as her duty to the world in return for her gift.

The next year Jones produced The Lie. In it Elinor Shale is the victim of a lie told by her sister, Lucy. Elinor gives up plans for a party, which means much to her, in order to go with her sister to a retired place until after her child is born. Two years

and a half later Lucy wins Mr. Forster from Elinor by actually telling him that she went away with Elinor who was in trouble. Mr. Forster has no reason to doubt Lucy's truthfulness, although he is dazed by the news. He goes to Egypt, where Lucy joins him, and there marries him. When they return and Forster sees Elinor with Lucy's son, he at once thinks him Elinor's boy; and he is only prevented from revealing the lie that would make clear everything to Elinor by Lucy's entrance into the room. Finally Elinor is told of the lie by Noll, a kind neighbor and admirer. She angrily confronts her sister with the lie and demands she confess the truth to her husband. Lucy is quite cowed and promises. Noll begs Elinor to marry him, knowing she can give him little true love, but willing to accept being cheated, as Elinor calls it. Her protest weakens gradually until her last "perhaps", which is equivalent to a promise.

The part of Elinor has been played very successfully by Margaret Illington. The play is interesting to us, in that it is serious drama with possibilities for effective melodrama, and yet Jones does not once allow melodrama to enter.

The period is evidently a restless one to Jones. He turns from one type of play to another. The first few years he descends to weak plays with the stamp of melodrama strongly on them. Next, he tries comedy and produces a few good ones. It would seem though that he hopes for his life work that he may produce serious plays or ones that approach tragedy, for he tries them so often. In spite of failures in this field, and bitterness and sarcasm because he fails, he attempts serious plays again and again. The Lie, which is his last play, is however, a successful play of this type.

Conclusion.

Jones' plays, I have divided into four periods which are, to a certain extent, chronological markings only; for Jones cannot safely be generalized on in any one period. Although certain characteristics are assigned to the plays of these periods, many exceptions can be found, since Jones does not maintain a fixed standard or advance steadily in his dramatic art.

In spite of the difficulty of making summary statements concerning Jones and his writings, I here attempt a short summing up of my study of his plays, which was for the purpose of determining the cause and extent of the influence of melodrama on Jones. The best definition of nineteenth century melodrama is found in the Oxford Dictionary which describes it as a "stage play (usually romantic and sensational in plot and incident) in which songs were interspersed and in which action was accompanied by orchestral music appropriate to the situations; ----- a dramatic piece characterized by sensational incident and violent appeals to the emotions but with a happy ending." It is further distinguished from tragedy in that whereas in tragedy the characters control the plot; in melodrama the plot controls the characters. With these four points in view let us turn to a survey of Jones' work to see when and where these characteristics assert themselves.

Jones began his literary career in the field of melodrama, because he could thus win the favorable consideration of stage-managers, who were being forced at this time to yield to the dictates of the British public for melodrama. He succeeded in 1892 in popularizing himself by a play called The Silver King, his only notable work of the first period. In it he made no attempt to write anything but

melodrama; it bears all the marks, nevertheless, it is a good play of that type.

But in the second period Jones made a deliberate effort to free himself from this influence, as shown in Saints and Sinners. Up to the last act he succeeded fairly well, he had developed some well-known types of English characters and repressed sensationalism. In the last act he was persuaded to add the typical happy ending although it was a sacrifice of reality. He had employed music, too, as a melodramatic device. He admitted that he had sold himself to "the dull devil of spectacular melodrama." Till 1890 he remained its slave, and then most unexpectedly he tore himself free from it in Judah, - a play of fasting and faith healing. No plot could have offered better ground work for a display of melodrama, but he shunned it throughout, and produced a serious drama of faithful characters. In The Dancing Girl we have three strong acts, followed by a weak one. So that in this period Jones shows an advance in technique over the first, a better understanding of his characters with ability^{more to} consistently portray them. Only in one play, Judah, is he not influenced by melodrama, although often he escapes until he arrives at the last act.

In the third period came the best plays from his pen. Among these are comedies which are not included here since melodrama does not enter into their make-up. The Tempter was an attempt at tragedy in blank verse that failed miserably; the characters were weaklings. It was spectacular and sensational. The Masqueraders contained several typical scenes of melodrama, such as the auction scene of the kiss in the bar-room, the gambling scene between husband and lover for the possession of the wife. It is an interesting plot play but with no faithful characterization. He produced

Michael and his Lost Angel during this period which is one of his masterpieces. And yet it shows the influence of early training. He enjoys effects so much that he sacrifices truthfulness to them. The death of Audrie in the last act has no purpose but to enlist the sympathy of the audience. Thus Jones mars his best plays by introducing melodrama.

The last period is representative of his whole career. He begins badly with The Hypocrites, then he writes good comedies, finally proves he can write serious drama, as shown by The Lie. He is sincere in trying to express the mind of his generation, and he ranks among the most brilliant dramatists of this age.

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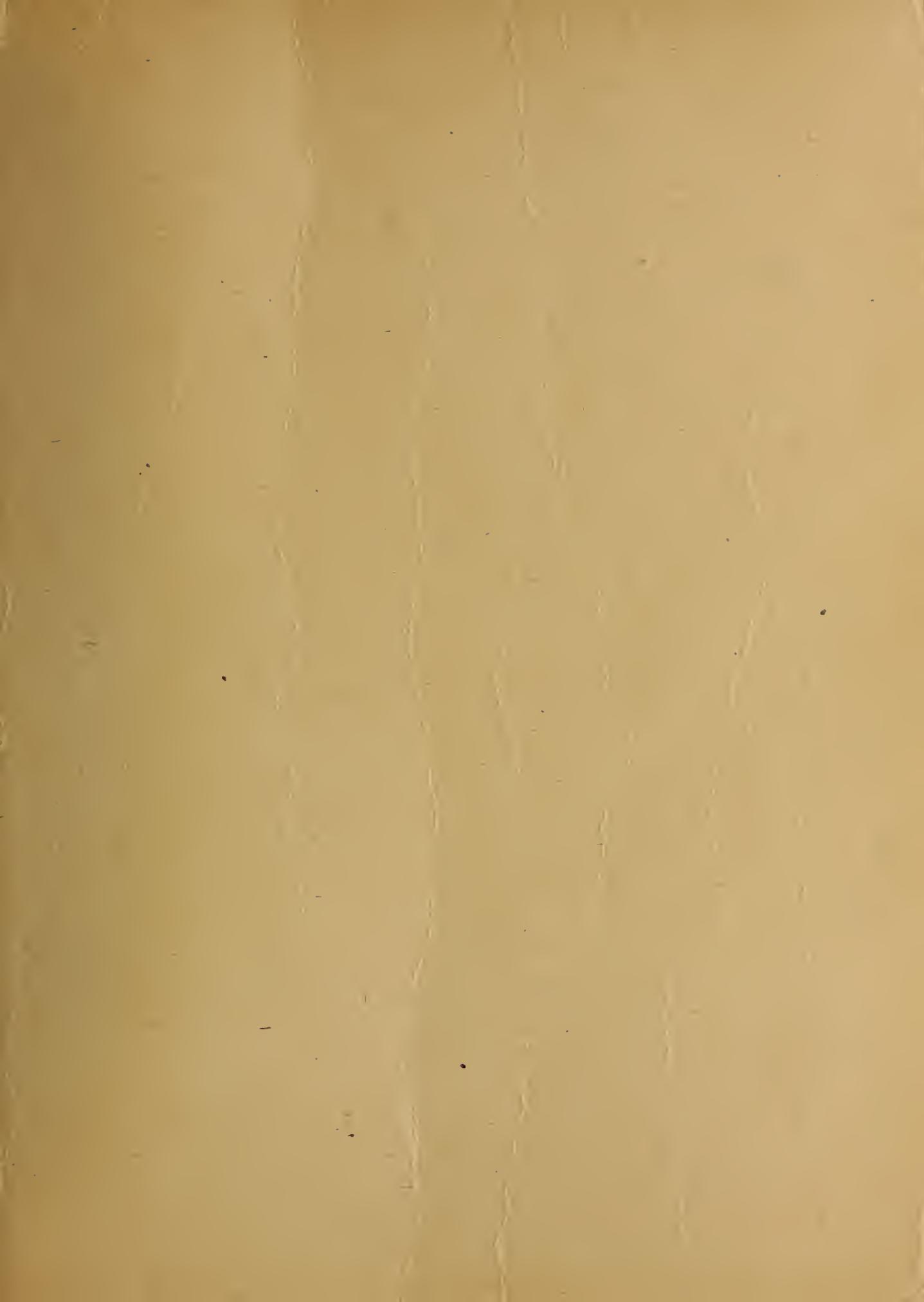
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